The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accounts and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor occurring in the industrial, legislative and political fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR
WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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WE PLEDGE— 1 MILLION DOLLARS IN WAR SAVINGS BONDS FOR VICTORY

WHOLE NO. 1686 WILLIAM GREEN, President WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, AUGUST 3, 1943 GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer VOL. 33, NO. 31

Minorities May Ask Strike Vote, Biddle Rules On Connally-Smith Act

Washington, D. C.—Attorney General Biddle ruled in an official opinion that under the Connally-Smith Act representatives of minority groups of employes have the right to petition for a strike vote.

Thus, as organized labor warned in advance, the stability of labor conditions in war production plants is seriously jeopardized by application of this anti-labor law.

The almost universal comment in the newspapers was that the law, as construed by Biddle, could not be enforced without endangering the war effort.

It was pointed out that if even two or three employes in a plant wished to do so they could force a strike vote.

Biddle said the language of the law was ambiguous and did not stipulate that a strike party to be asked, not only by the collective bargaining representatives of the majority of the workers in a plant.

Thus, troublemakers, not subject to union discipline, can disrupt conditions in vital war factories and cause constant turmoil.

At the same time, the War Labor Board held that the Connally-Smith Act did not intend to bar labor or employer unions from sitting in judgment on cases involving affiliates of national labor or business organizations.

Under this ruling, the AFL members of the board may sit in cases involving AFL unions so long as they are not members or officers of the particular union involved.

The conclusion of types of cases in which board members are not disqualified from acting, the opinion stated:

"We do not believe that a labor member is disqualified by the terms of the statute from participation in a decision (as) involving a local union affiliated with a national or international union simply because he is an officer, employe or representative of the national or international union or by inveiving a local or national union because he is an officer, employe or representative of a federation with which the union is affiliated.

"In each case he is obviously not an officer or employe of the union which is the party to the dispute and can he be said to be a representative of the party having that quality of direct interest in the outcome of the case that would serve to disqualify him.

"Similarly, an industry member of the board would not be disqualified if he was an officer, employe or representative of a trade association if the employer, party to the case was a member but which had not acted in the matter on the employer's behalf."

Convention Call!

Washington, D. C.—The official call for the 63d annual convention of the American Federation of Labor was issued by President William Green and Secretary-Treasurer George Meany, to all affiliated unions.

The convention will open at 10 a. m., October 4, in the Statler Hotel, Boston, Mass.

Stressing the gravity of the wartime problems facing the Federation's millions of members in the United States and Canada, the official convention call said:

"The winning of the war is the primary objective of all classes of people, including the membership of the American Federation of Labor. The destruction of totalitarianism and the triumph of democracy, the establishment and maintenance of free, democratic unions and the administration of said free, democratic unions by the membership, free from government domination and government control, are issues involved in the outcome of this conflict in which labor is vitally interested.

"The winning of the war and of the peace which will follow are questions which will be considered and acted upon by the delegates in attendance at the 63d annual convention of the American Federation of Labor. The deliberations of those in attendance at the convention and action taken by the officers and delegates will be influenced by singleness of thought and purpose. They will seek to cooperate fully with the government in the promotion of the war effort, to protect and preserve the economic philosophy as well as the principles and policies of the American Federation of Labor and to protect and preserve our common heritage of freedom, liberty, justice and democracy."

Congressman Rowan Expresses Praise Of Labor Unions' Aid To War Effort

Declaring that no single group, outside the actual fighting forces of the United States, had surpassed organized labor, Congressman William A. Rowan, of Illinois, vigorously acclaimed labor's contribution to the war effort in a stirring speech delivered just before the recess of Congress.

Not only has the American workman turned out equipment, ships, guns, guns, tanks, planes, and ships in a manner that has astounded the world and bewildered our enemies, asserted the Congressman, he has also purchased an enormous amount of war bonds.

"Labor has not been found wanting, and without the patriotic service of organized labor, America, our districts, and our allies would not be so far advanced on the road to victory as at the present time," Mr. Rowan continued. He pointed out that labor's cooperation in this war is no mushroom growth; that union workers recognized their obligation "long before Pearl Harbor and have since doubled their efforts since that time; that they are today "willing to set their record" against that of any other group in the country or in the world.

Congressman Rowan praised the far-sighted attitude of Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau who, recognizing Labor's will to win, insisted from the outset of the war savings program—that workers be given every opportunity to participate in all the great war bond drives. His first step toward attainment of this goal was to talk with AFL President William Green and CIO President Philip Murray, both of whom offered not only their personal help but that of their entire memberships.

President Green, furthermore, turned over gratis to the Treasury Department the entire AFL organization staff—1,000-odd men and women in all—to establish and direct 31 district offices in conjunction with the Treasury Department. This meant that every organization, regardless of size, would be able to participate in war bond purchases.

Mr. Green pledged the AFL and its affiliates to buy $1,000,000,000 worth of war bonds during 1942, a pledge which was royally fulfilled; and has again set a billion as AFL's minimum bond buying for 1943.

Civilian Defense Is Well Organized, Landis Says On 'Labor For Victory'

Washington, D. C. — "America's home defense are now so well organized in the average community that Civilian Defense is prepared to operate efficiently in the event of any danger," James M. Landis, Director of Civilian Defense, said on the NBC radio program, "Labor For Victory," presented by the American Federation of Labor.

Pointing out, however, that daily Allied raids on German production centers were bringing the war into retributive raids in spite of almost certain heavy losses, Director Landis warned against any complacency or relaxation of alertness on the home front.

"Just because we have not yet been attacked by enemy planes in this country," he said, "we must not assume that we will be spared such attacks in the future. We do not dare to take chances with the safety of our people, our homes, our communities and our tremendous industrial establishment producing the weapons of war so vitally needed for victory.

"Some people are beginning to treat air raid drills and blackouts as a game or a nuisance," he said. "That is just the sort of attitude our enemies may welcome. The Civilian Defense ment our alertness relaxes may be the very moment they will choose to attack."

Appearing with Director Landis on the NBC program broadcast from Washington were Maj. Gen. U. S. Grant, 3d, chief of OCD's Protection Branch, and George J. Richardson, Secretary-Treasurer of the International Association of Fire Fighters, Washington.

Mr. Richardson contrasted present civilian preparations against attack and the situation 14 months before Pearl Harbor and 9 months before creation by the President of the Office of Civilian Defense, when the AFL Fire Fighters Union first rallied for establishment in this country of organized civilian defense measures.

At that time, he said, a survey requested by the union in a letter to President Roosevelt disclosed that fire-fighting equipment—the first line of civilian defense against air raids —was "shockingly inadequate and obsolete" in many American communities.

Crediting OCD with helping to bring about vast improvements in the nation's fire-fighting facilities, Mr. Richardson said that much of the success in community air raid and plant protection systems "is due largely to the fact that OCD had the wisdom to seek and encourage labor participation in its program."

General Grant said that civilian organization for the protection of industrial plants against the effects of air raid, sabotage, fire, and other enemy-inspired acts is one of the most important tasks of Civilian Defense.

"Every war plant is the starting point of direct attack against the enemy," he said. "That plant goes to battle, often in a matter of days, just as surely as the soldiers who operate them or use them. Our program calls for making these factories capable of resisting any enemy attack."

With the cooperation of both management and labor, General Grant said, OCD is seeking to establish protection programs—already well developed in a great many plants—on a voluntary basis in all industrial plants making war materials or essential civilian supplies.

New Food, Manpower Programs Now Being Prepared, FDR Reveals

Outline Of Program For Service Men

Washington, D. C.—President Roosevelt outlined the following Government program for the men in the armed forces after the war is won:

1. Mustering-out pay to every member of the armed forces and merchant marine when he or she is honorably discharged, large enough in each case to cover a reasonable period of time between his discharge and the finding of a new job.

2. In case no job is found after diligent search, then unemployment insurance if the individual registers with the United States Employment Service.

3. An opportunity for members of the armed services to get further education or trade training at the cost of their Government.

4. Allowance of credit to all members of the armed forces, under unemployment compensation, and Federal old-age and survivors' insurance, for their period of service. For these purposes they should be treated as if they had continued their employment in private industry.

5. Improved and liberalized provisions for hospitalization, rehabilitation and medical care of disabled members of the armed forces and merchant marine.

6. Sufficient pensions for disabled members of the armed forces.

Petrillo And Orchestras Planning Free Concerts For Smaller Cities

New York City—The union musicians of the leading symphony orchestras, including the New York Philharmonic, the Boston Symphony and the Philadelphia Orchestra, and their conductors, are to give concerts free of charge in the smaller American cities, it was announced by James C. Petrillo, president of the American Federation of Musicians.

Mr. Petrillo said that all expenses of the concerts would be met by the American Federation of Labor musicians union and that it had already authorized the expenditure of $500,000. He estimated that a total of 570 free concerts would be provided.

The union leaders said the plan was first suggested by President Roosevelt.

Mr. Petrillo said that he had been invited to the White House last Dec. 29 and that President Roosevelt was "very much concerned that the people in the small cities in the United States were not getting enough first-class concert music, especially during wartime.

"He pointed out to me," Mr. Petrillo's statement continued, "that in many foreign countries concert orchestras are sent from city to city so that the people who are not in a financial position to travel to the big cities to hear the great symphonies may have the finest music free of charge.

"He was wondering whether or not the American Federation of Musicians could not do something along the same line. I told the President that I would be very happy to take this matter up with the international executive board of the American Federation of Musicians and I felt sure something could be done about it."

Mr. Petrillo also regarded it as "very significant that the President of the United States has made the responsibilities he has during this crisis, found the time to think of the people in the smaller communities and provide an opportunity for them to see and hear the outstanding musical organizations in the United States."

The concerts will enable many persons to see and hear the major orchestras for the first time, Mr. Petrillo said, and in addition will do "a great deal for home morale during these distressed times."

(Washington, D. C.—President Roosevelt is tremendously pleased with the proposal, his press secretary, Stephen Early said. "It is an idea he has had for years," Early told reporters. "When Petrillo visited him in December, the President suggested that the union think over the proposal.")

Mr. Petrillo said that the symphony orchestras of the following major cities would participate in the project:

Los Angeles, San Francisco, Washington, Chicago, Baltimore, Detroit, Minneapolis, Kansas City, St. Louis, New York, Rochester, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Philadelphia, Boston, Pittsburgh, Pa., and Indianapolis.

On a lesser scale, Mr. Petrillo said, orchestras from the following cities are also expected to participate: Bridgeport, Calif.; Colorado Springs and Denver, Colo.; New Haven and Hartford, Conn.; Wilmington, Del.; Jacksonville, Fla.; Peoria, Ill.; Evansville, Fort Wayne, South Bend and Terre Haute, Ind.; Sioux City and Waterloo, Iowa; Lawrence, Kan.; Louisville, Ky.; New Orleans, La., and Portland, Me.

Also Flint, Kalamazoo and Grand Rapids, Mich.; Duluth and St. Paul, Minn.; Jackson, Miss.; Missoula, Mont.; Newark and Trenton, N. J.; Albany, Buffalo, Syracuse and Utica, N. Y.; Asheville and Charlotte, N. C.; Fargo, N. Dak.; Toledo, Ohio; Oklahoma City and Tulsa, Okla.; Altoona, Harrisburg, Reading and Scranton, Pa.; Charleston and Columbia, S. C.; Memphis, Tenn.; Dallas, El Paso, Fort Worth, San Antonio and Waco, Tex.; Salt Lake City, Utah; Norfolk, Va.; Charleston and Wheeling, W. Va.; Racine, Wis., and Cheyenne, Wyo.

Georgia Labor's Liberty Ship Will Be Launched On Labor Day

Savannah, Ga.—The AFL unions in Georgia are making good progress in raising from $3,500,000 to $4,000,000 to defray the costs of Georgia labor's Liberty ship, named after Jerome Jones, to be launched here on Labor Day at the Southeastern Shipyard.

In three months workers at the Southeastern plant bought $1,000,000 worth of bonds to go toward paying for the construction of the ship they are building. Employes at the state's other shipyards, the Savannah Machine & Foundry Co., and the Macon Shipbuilding Corp., workers at the Union Bag & Paper Corp. plant have also purchased $1,000,000 worth of bonds and local unions have bought many thousands of dollars of bonds to help pay for the ship.

The scheme of having labor throughout the state sponsor the war bond campaign for the ship was formulated by the Savannah Building Trades Council, H. C. Skinner, president, and was given an enthusiastic and unanimous approval at the convention of the Georgia Federation of Labor in Atlanta the latter part of April. Shortly thereafter the state federation appointed William P. Cooney, Savannah labor leader, chairman of the campaign.

Jerome Jones, for whom Labor's Liberty ship will be named, was a distinguished labor leader of Georgia and spent the greater part of his life in Atlanta. Comprehensive biographical data on the life and work of Jerome Jones has been furnished the U. S. Maritime Commission which has approved the selection of the name.

New Jersey Organized Labor Backs Murphy As Candidate For Governor

Newark, N. J.—Mayor Vincent J. Murphy, of Newark, who is also secretary of the New Jersey Federation of Labor, was agreed upon July 28 as the Democratic candidate for governor in the coming elections.

He will have the united backing of AFL, CIO and railroad unions, as well as that of Gov. Charles Edison and Mayor Frank Hague, of Jersey City.

He was indorsed separately by Hague and Edison after delegations representing labor—AFL, CIO and the brotherhoods—had visited both officials and demanded that Murphy be indorsed.

Murphy is a member of the United Association of Plumbers and Steamfitters. He was 50 years old August 1, and started out 36 years ago as a plumber's apprentice. For 18 years he was secretary of Local 24 of the plumbers' union, and for 5 years secretary-treasurer of the state federation.

He was elected to the city commission in 1937 as labor's candidate, polling nearly 60,000 votes in a field of 48 candidates. He was chosen mayor in 1941. He has two daughters and one son, Kingt Vincent J., at present with the Army Air Force in Australia.

The AFL Plan To Banish Fear of Want

Ninth Article Recommends Total Disability And Rehabilitation Insurance Benefits Covering Injured Workers

Our social insurance system as it now stands does nothing to protect a worker against total and permanent disability which is not caused by his work and so is not insured under state workmen's compensation laws. When a man is permanently disabled, his wife and children need help as much as if he had died. They may be in even worse circumstances because he still needs food and care and perhaps expensive medical treatment. His wife or one of the older children who might otherwise have gone to work may have to stay home to attend to his needs. No wage earner can afford to buy enough insurance from private insurance companies to give his family the help they require if he becomes permanently disabled. Only social insurance can make it possible for all of us to buy this kind of protection at a price we can afford. Through social insurance we can pool the risks and distribute the cost widely over all the nation's workers.

Retirement for Disability or Old Age

Permanent disability insurance is related to the system of old-age and survivors' insurance which we already have. A man who is permanently disabled is like one who has to retire because of old age. He cannot hold a job and it looks as if he never will be able to. He needs money to keep him and his family will have to come from some other source that wages. Yet he will need a regular income as long as he lives; and if his wife or young children outlive him, they will need an income, too. If we lock on disability as premature old age, we see the logic of having the insurance programs for both of those risks closely tied together.

Permanent disability insurance should provide benefits to every worker who becomes totally and permanently disabled, outside the course of his work, under the same conditions as if that man had reached the age of 65 and retired. His benefit would be related to the size of his previous earnings paying a larger proportion of the wage to workers whose previous wages had been low. The way to calculate those benefits is explained in the fifth article in this series. Look at the proposed table of benefits for old-age and survivors' insurance in that article and you will see what the permanently disabled worker would be entitled to, depending on his previous average monthly wage and the length of time he had been employed before he became disabled.

Benefits to the Disabled Worker's Family

If a disabled man has a wife or young children they would, under the Federal Security proposed amendment to the social Security Law, get an additional benefit one-half the size of his own primary benefit, except that the total benefit for the family could not be more than double his benefit. If his average wage has been $150 a month and he worked steadily for 10 years in covered employment before he became permanently disabled, he would be entitled to a monthly disability benefit of $46.00. His wife and each of his children under 18 years old would be entitled to $22.80, except that the family's combined benefits could not exceed $68.90, twice his benefit of $44.00. That would go a long way toward meeting the needs of his family which under our present law would get nothing. These benefits would continue as long as the worker was disabled.

The proposed amendment would not only give the disabled worker and his family an income; it would also save him from losing his old-age and survivors' insurance rights. Under the present law, the eligibility requirements for old-age and survivors' insurance make it necessary for a worker to be employed in covered employment half the time between January 1937 for the date on which he became 21) and the time he dies or becomes 65. Suppose a worker had been working steadily since January 1937, but became disabled in December 1942. His old-age and survivors' insurance rights are protected for the next six years, but if he dies or becomes 65 in 1949 or afterward he and his dependents would get no benefits because he would not be insured any longer.

If we amend the Social Security Law and provide permanent disability benefits, this family would never lose its old-age and survivors' insurance benefits even though the wage earner's disability prevented him from returning to work. All the time that the worker was permanently disabled would be excluded from the period counted for eligibility. If the wage earner was eligible for disability benefits, he and his family would be eligible for retirement and dependents' benefits when he reached 65 or died. This is a very important addition.

Rehabilitation

Sometimes a seriously disabled worker can take special medical and surgical treatment and special training or retraining that will enable him to go back to work in some kind of position; but the worker and the worker must know what kinds of work he is likely to be able to do and the chances of getting and of holding that kind of job. A special consulting office in the employment service will be built up to give disabled workers just this kind of information and advice, and could help them to be placed when they are ready for work. Even before he was entirely able to return to work, the worker who had been disabled could begin to take the kind of training that would fit him for the sort of work his handicap permitted him to do. Proper training courses can be set up to give each worker who has been disabled the special kind of training or retraining he needs.

Rehabilitation and disability insurance go hand in hand. A disabled worker can take proper medical or surgical care and the proper training if he and his family have an assured income while he is fitting himself to go back to work. Disability insurance money spent on rehabilitation puts workers back on their feet. It is cheaper than paying benefits for many years; and it gives a disabled worker the satisfaction of having his independence again. For this reason the permanent disability insurance amendment to the social security law should provide for rehabilitating disabled workers, also, wherever possible.

No Interference With Workmen's Compensation

Temporary and permanent disability insurance need not interfere with the large payments which some might get under workmen's compensation if he is injured on the job. The Federation's proposed amendment to the Social Security Law provides permanent disability insurance only for disability not connected with a person's employment. Organized labor must still strive to get better workmen's compensation legislation. Our efforts would be strengthened by a system of disability insurance.

Toward Real Security

Temporary and permanent disability insurance should protect all workers who are now covered under old age and survivors' insurance and all who would be covered under the Federation's proposed amendment to liberalize the old age and survivors' insurance by extending its coverage. Then we shall have a system of real family security against total loss of income because of the death, old age, or of "premature old age" due to the disability of the wage earner.

A. F. OF L. COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL SECURITY,
MATTHEW WOLL, *Chairman*,
GEORGE MEANY,
G. M. BUGNIAZET,
JOHN P. FREY.

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President Says His Plans And Suggestions Will Be Aired "In Few Weeks"

Washington, D. C.—In his latest fireside chat to the nation on the progress of the war, President Roosevelt disclosed the Government is drawing up plans for solution of food, manpower and other domestic wartime problems.

He announced he will go on the air again "in a few weeks" to discuss "definite actions" to be taken by the Executive branch of the Government and recommendations for new legislation by Congress.

Throughout his address, the President emphasized that the home front is a vital part of the war effort and must be kept on an efficient and highly productive basis.

This is the same point that was stressed by leaders of organized labor at a recent White House conference when they appealed to the President for action to roll back prices. In September, 1942, levels and prevent inflationary profiteering from sapping the strength of the nation's workers.

The President referred to this problem in his radio address and promised constructive action after he had presented a six-point program for taking care of members of the armed forces after the war is won. He said:

"Your Government is drawing up other serious, constructive plans for certain immediate forward moves. They concern food, manpower, and other domestic problems, but they tie in with our armed forces. Within a few weeks I shall speak with you again in regard to definite actions to be taken by the Executive branch of the Government and specific recommendations for new legislation by the Congress."

AFL leaders indicated they will await announcement of the President's new anti-inflation program before taking any further steps.

Critical situations have arisen in the shipbuilding, railroad and other major industries because of the refusal of Government authorities to grant wage increases while the prices are being squeezed by rapidly rising living costs.

Union leaders have accused OPA and WFA officials of failure to live up to the policies set forth by the President and the Stabilization Act with regard to keeping down the cost of food and other necessities of life.

WALLACE PAYS TRIBUTE TO LABOR'S WAR EFFORT

Detroit, Mich. — Unqualified commendation for labor's full support of the war effort was expressed by Vice President Henry A. Wallace in an address here.

"Labor," he asserted, "is beginning to do its part in establishing the public. It is beginning to make crystal clear that 97 per cent of labor has cooperated 100 per cent with our government in the war effort. Let that record which can show a more comprehensive effort throw the first stone at labor.

"More and more in the future labor will demonstrate that it can cooperate with both employers and with agriculture in those measures which lead to increased employment, increased production and a higher standard of living."

Labor, he said, will be chief sufferer if reactionary interests succeed in their "machinations," the Vice President declared, and added:

"The people of America know that the second step toward Nazism is the destruction of labor unions. There are many Hitlers here who continually attack labor. There are other demagogues blind to the errors of every other group who shout, 'We love labor, but' — they are the midget Hitlers and the demagogues are enemies of America. Such would destroy the labor unions if they could. Labor should be fully aware of its friends and of its enemies."

OVERTIME RATE VIOLATION COSTS TWO FIRMS $3,768

Washington, D. C.—AFL President William Green received a letter from an employe of T. W. Minton & Co., Barbourville, Ky., manufacturers of lumber and building materials, in which it was stated that some 150 employes were required to work for this company for 40 hours a week at 35 cents per hour. When the 40 hours were up, they were required to work on the same job and, at the same machines but for a different employer—the Upper Cumberland Hardwood Co. Through this arrangement, no one received a penny of overtime pay for the hours worked. A number of men worked as long as 84 hours per week.

The American Federation of Labor placed this case before R. Metcalf Walling, administrator of the Wages and Hour Division of the Department of Labor. An investigation showed that the complaint was substantiated, and a violation of the overtime requirements of the Wages and Hours Law was found. The Wage and Hour Division determined that $3,768 is back pay was due to 150 employes. The companies were directed to complete the payment of this amount.